

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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TAGS: TECH ENGR IN
SUBJECT: FREE PRESS JOURNAL ARTICLE ON "NUCLEAR FUEL AND INDO-US
PERCEPTIONS"

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION NEW DELHI FROM BOMBAY APR 18 REPEATED:

QUOTE

BOMBAY 0963

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: TECH, ENGR, IN
SUBJ: FREE PRESS JOURNAL ARTICLE ON "NUCLEAR FUEL AND INDO-
USE PERCEPTIONS/"

1. IN AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE APRIL 18 EDITION OF
BOMBAY'S FREE PRESS JOURNAL ON "NUCLEAR FUEL AND INDO-US
PERCEPTIONS" P.R. CHARI BEGINS BY STATING THAT THE PRIME
MINISTER'S MARCH 24 STATEMENT IN PARLIAMENT THAT INDIA
WOULD NOT SIGN THE NPT EVEN IF IT MEANT A SHUTTING DOWN OF
TARAPUR IS "UNAMBIGUOUS" AND WOULD REASSURE THOSE WHO FELT
THAT THE PRIME MINISTER WAS "SERIOUSLY ABRIDGING INDIA'S
NUCLEAR AUTONOMY FOR THE SAKE OF ENSURING CONTINUED US
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SUPPLIES OF NUCLEAR FUEL FOR TARAPUR."

2. CHARI CONTINUED THAT DESAI'S STATEMENTS OVER THE LAST
YEAR REVEALS "A SPIRIT OF ACCOMMODATION" WITH THE US NON-
PROLIFERATION POLICIES, AND THAT GIVEN THE "SKEPTICISM" IN
THE WEST FOLLOWING POKHARAN "SUCH RESILIENCE HAD DIPLOMATIC
ADVANTAGES," MAKING POSSIBLE A LARGER INTERACTION WITH THE

US WITHOUT GETTING THE RELATIONSHIP "BOGGED DOWN" ON THE NUCLEAR ISSUE.

3. CHARI OUTLINED JANATA NUCLEAR POLICY WHICH "DERIVED ESSENTIALLY FROM INDIA'S NUCLEAR POLICY REFINED OVER THREE DECADES OF CONGRESS RULE." THE POINTS ARE:

(A) NO INDIAN MANUFACTURE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS
IRRESPECTIVE OF THE NATURE OF PROVOCATION,
S WHICH IS "QUALITATIVELY MORE CATEGORICAL"
THAN BEFORE.

(B) NO NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS FOR PEACEFUL OR OTHER
PURPOSES.

(C) NO INDIAN SIGNATURE OF THE NPT "IN CONSONANCE
WITH INDIA'S CONSISTENT STAND THAT THE TREATY
DISCRIMINATES AND FAILS TO ACHIEVE A BALANCE OF
OBLIGATIONS BETWEEN NUCLEAR AND NON-NUCLEAR
STATES."

4. CHARI THEN GOES ON TO STATE THAT "SOME POLITICAL MIS-
PERCEPTIONS WERE LIKELY" THROUGH THE PRIME MINISTER'S MORE
RECENT STATEMENT THAT INDIA WOULD SIGN THE NPT IF HIS THREE
CONDITIONS, WHICH CHARI CITES, WERE MET.

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5. LATER IT WAS STATED THAT IF ONLY THE US, USSR AND UK
ENTERED INTO A CTBT AN ATMOSPHERE WOULD BE CREATED WHERE
FRANCE AND CHINA WOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO JOIN. THIS "WEAKENED
THE TRADITIONAL INDIAN STAND" THAT THE CTBT COULD NOT BE
EFFECTIVE WITHOUT ALL FIVE SIGNATORIES. IT WAS MENTIONED
THAT "A MEANINGFUL REDUCTION AS DISTINCT FROM ELIMINATION"
WOULD BE SUFFICIENT. IT WAS ALSO STATED THAT THERE COULD BE
"SOME FLEXIBILITY ON THE INSPECTION ISSUE." "THE IMPRESS-
ION CREATED...WAS THAT A SLOW EROSION OF INDIA'S NUCLEAR
AUTONOMY WAS TAKING PLACE", APPARENTLY NECESSITATED BY THE
NEED TO SECURE ENRICHED URANIUM.

6. CHARI CONTINUED THAT DESPITE PRESIDENT CARTER'S PROMISE
THAT ENRICHED URANIUM WOULD BE SHIPPED, THE NRC HAS YET TO
ACT AND INDEED ITS LAST TWO MEETINGS WERE POSTPONED FOR A
LACK OF QUORUM. "IT IS OBVIOUS THAT ENRICHED URANIUM SUPPLIES
ARE BEING DELAYED TO GENERATE PSYCHOLOGICAL PRESSURES UPON
INDIA, TO ACCEPT FURTHER SAFEGUARDS UPON HER NUCLEAR
PROGRAM."

7. THE AUTHOR NOTES THAT THE US NPT WOULD REQUIRE THAT CIRUS
AND TROMBAY, INDIGENOUSLY CONSTRUCTED, WOULD COME UNDER

SAFEGUARDS. "FURTHER, INDIA'S FUTURE NUCLEAR PROGRAM, WHICH IS PREDICTED UPON FAST BREEDER TECHNOLOGY, AND IS ANATHEMA TO THE US, WOULD ALSO COME UNDER THESE SAFEGUARDS." ALTHOUGH HE HAS THE AUTHORITY, THE PRESIDENT IS "UNLIKELY" TO OVERRULE THE NRC. THE REASON FOR THE NPT IS "THE FEAR OF HORIZONTAL NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION... GENERATED BY POKHARAN" AND THE PRESIDENT IS ENJOINED TO RENEGOTIATE EXISTING AGREEMENT.

8. RETURNING TO THE FUEL STORAGE PROBLEM THE AUTHOR NOTES THAT THE US HAS FIRST OPTION ON BUY-BACK BUT THAT THE USE OF REPROCESSING FACILITIES CAN ONLY BE UNDERTAKEN BY JOINT DETERMINATION. E NOTES THAT INDIA CANNOT REPROCESS AT TARAPUR WITHOUT US AGREEMENT, WHICH IS "UNLIKELY." FURTHER SINCE THE NPT REQUIRES THAT NUCLEAR MATERIAL EXPORTED OR REPROCESSED

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"WILL NOT BE REPROCESSED OR ALTERED IN FORM OR CONTENT" WITHOUT US APPROVAL THE PLUTONIUM REPROCESSING PLANT AT TARAPUR CANNOT BE COMMISSIONED.

9. "IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THERE IS LITTLE POSSIBILITY OF ANY COMPROMISE" BETWEEN THE US AND INDIA ON THE TARAPUR FUEL ISSUE. IT WILL BE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO OBTAIN FUEL SUPPLIES, WHICH IN ANY CASE WOULD CEASE AT THE END OF 1979. IT IS DIFFICULT TO "VISUALIZE" INDIA'S ACCEPTANCE OF SAFE-GUARDS BECAUSE THE "RENUNCIATION OF NUCLEAR AUTONOMY WOULD BE UNACCEPTABLE DOMESTICALLY."

10. CHARI CONCLUDES THAT AT THE TECHNICAL LEVEL THE VARIOUS POSSIBILITIES OF KEEPING TARAPUR OPERATIONAL THROUGH ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGICAL PROCESSES BE EXAMINED. AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL "IT WOULD REQUIRE MATURITY IN THE LEADERSHIP" TO ISOLATE TARAPUR FROM THE "BROADER MATRIX" OF INDO-US RELATIONS. "ELSE, THE PRESENT, GROWING DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES COULD AGAIN GET INEXTRICABLY ENMESHED IN STERILE BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS."
COURTNEY

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GOHEEN

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